

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

April 29, 2003 LB 407, 540

them and promote consolidation, and this was working very well, but we have now dispensed with that money so we no longer have any money for that area. A couple years ago I introduced a bill for the education round table. The bill, also because of the budget deficit, never got off the ground. I still feel very strongly that it was a good idea in the fact of getting education groups together, getting K through 12, getting the university, looking ahead. Again, that's one thing that I'm always criticized and many of you are too in...from your constituencies is not ever looking ahead. This would have given us an opportunity for the education groups to sort of assess where we are and what we have to do in the future. As I say, unfortunately, that did not get off of the ground. I think, since we started in the 1990s, one of the goals we have had, and we've talked about that, is to increase our state aid so that we have more relief in property, property tax relief. And it's been mentioned this afternoon in the discussions that we have seen an increase in state spending, but many...much of that has gone back to more aid to ESUs, more aid to counties, more aid to cities, more aid to schools, and what we are doing now is actually cutting that aid and, as we've said before, shifting that burden back, much of it, to our local property tax area. LB 540, no, it's not the most tasteful bill in the fact that it is raising the levy, but I think there is a balance in the fact that we're trying to keep some of the state aid and yet also increasing the opportunity for some additional funding on the local level. And again, it doesn't mandate that schools will need to go to that \$1.04; it allows them to if necessary.

SPEAKER BROMM: One minute.

SENATOR STUHR: I don't exactly know and I'd like to ask Senator Maxwell one question about offering better opportunities in alternative education. Could you just give a brief goal what you had in mind there?

SPEAKER BROMM: Senator Maxwell, would you yield?

SENATOR MAXWELL: Yeah, Senator Stuhr, this idea crystallized for me early this year when people started asking the question maybe the state could help Omaha pay for the cops in the schools